

I/WE CLAIM:

1. A refrigerator cabinet assembly comprises:
 - a shell including first and second laterally spaced upstanding side walls which are interconnected by a top wall to define first and second corners, each of said first and second side walls and said top wall including a front edge portion being in-turned to form a flange assembly which defines a liner receiving cavity opening laterally inward of the shell, said flange assembly including at least a front flange leading to a return flange that extends to a rear flange;
 - a mullion extending across and interconnecting the first and second side walls; and
 - a reinforcement assembly including first and second reinforcing members, each of said first and second reinforcing members being arranged against a respective said rear flange and a corresponding said side wall.
2. The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 1, wherein each of the first and second reinforcing members include a plurality of mounting apertures, said mounting apertures being adapted to receive a respective plurality of mechanical fasteners, said refrigerator cabinet assembly further including at least one hinge member attached to a respective one of the first and second reinforcing members with the plurality of mechanical fasteners.
3. The refrigerator assembly according to claim 1, wherein the flange assembly further includes a terminal bent section extending from the rear

flange, said terminal bent section having at least one opening extending therethrough.

4. The refrigerator assembly according to claim 3, wherein at least one of the first and second reinforcing members includes at least one tab member projecting therefrom, said tab member extending through the opening in the terminal bent section.

5. The refrigerator assembly according to claim 4, wherein the terminal bent section opening is defined by a slot.

6. The refrigerator assembly according to claim 5, wherein said at least one of the first and second reinforcing members includes a plurality of spaced tabs and the terminal bent section is formed with a plurality of slots, each of said plurality of tabs being received within a respective one of said plurality of slots.

7. The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second reinforcing members constitutes a corner bracket including a top plate having first and second upper depending flanges and a side plate having first and second side depending flanges, said corner bracket being positioned in the first corner of the shell.

8. The refrigerator assembly according to claim 7, wherein the corner bracket further includes a plurality of bent tab elements, said bent tab elements projecting from the top and side plates respectively.

9. The refrigerator assembly according to claim 8, wherein the shell is formed from a pre-painted material and the bent tab elements eliminate sharp corners and edges which would cause deformation of the pre-painted material during a foam injection process.

10. The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second reinforcement members constitutes a stanchion including a front wall, an outer side wall extending substantially perpendicular to the front wall, an inner side wall extending substantially perpendicular to the front wall and parallel to the outer side wall, and a lower frontal plate arranged at a lower portion of the front wall.

11. The refrigerator according to claim 10, further comprising: an intermediate frontal plate arranged along the front wall of the stanchion.

12. The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 11, wherein the lower frontal plate and intermediate frontal plate are offset from the front wall.

13. The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 11, further comprising: a plurality of tab elements arranged in a spaced relationship along the inner side wall.

14. The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 13, further comprising: a plurality of slotted openings arranged along a lower portion of the terminal bent end section, said plurality of tab elements

projecting through the plurality of slotted openings, with the stanchion is nested behind the rear flange.

15. The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 10, wherein at least one of the first and second reinforcing members constitutes a corner bracket including a top plate having first and second upper depending flanges and a side plate having first and second side depending flanges, said corner bracket being positioned in the first corner of the shell.

16. A method of assembling a refrigerator cabinet comprising:
creating a shell by bending a single sheet of material to form side walls interconnected by a top wall;
forming the shell with front face portions by in-turning front edge portions of the side and top walls;
creating a flange assembly, which opens laterally inward of the shell, behind the front face portion, said flange assembly including at least a front flange leading to a return flange that extends to a rear flange;
inserting a plurality reinforcing members behind said rear flange such that each of said first and second reinforcing members is arranged against a respective rear flange and a corresponding said side wall; and
securing the plurality reinforcing members within the shell.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein inserting the plurality of reinforcing members includes positioning a pair of corner brackets at a respective interconnection of the top wall with a respective one of the side walls, and behind the return flange.

18. The method of claim 16, further comprising:
forming the shell from pre-painted sheet metal; and
providing each of the corner brackets with bent tabs arranged
against the top and side walls to prevent deformation of the top and side
walls when the shell is injected with foam insulation
19. The method of claim 16, wherein inserting the plurality of
reinforcing members includes positioning a pair of stanchion members
behind the return flanges at lower front edge portions of the shell.
20. The method of claim 19, further comprising: locating each said
stanchion member behind the return flange by positioning tab elements
carried by the stanchion member through corresponding slotted openings
extending through the flange assembly.
21. The method of claim 20, further comprising: attaching hinge
members to each of the corner brackets and stanchion members.